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OCTOBER 1, 1988

A CAHNERS R. R. BOWKER PUBLICATION

Why That "Bad Rap" for Academic Libraries?
Library Literature, ERIC, & LISA Evaluated

ET TU, JOAN?
142 First Novels

VOL. 113 No. 16

LIBRARY JOURNAL

October 1, 1988

ISSN 0363-0277

Joan Collins is more recognizable than most first novelists; will she be more successful? Comments from other first novelists begin on page 42. Photograph: © 1987 by Gary Bernstein

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LIBRARY JOURNAL is published by Bowker Magazine Group, Cahners Magazine Division, Terrence M. McDermott, President; Carroll V. Dowden, Group Vice President; Jerry D. Neth, Vice President/Publishing Operations; J. J. Walsh, Financial Vice President/Magazine Division; Thomas J. Dellamaria, Vice President/Production & Manufacturing. Bowker Magazine Group is also an affiliate of R. R. Bowker Co., Gordon Graham, Chairman of the Board; Ira Siegel, President. Copyright © 1988 by Reed Publishing, USA; Saul Goldweitz, Chairman; Ronald G. Segel, President/CEO; Robert L. Krakoff, Executive Vice President; William M. Platt, Sr. Vice President. Direct editorial and advertising correspondence to 249 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011. Telephone: 212-463-6819. Subscription inquiries and changes of address should be directed to Library Journal, PO Box 1977, Marion, OH 43305-1977. Telephone: 1-800-669-1002 (in continental U.S. only). In Alaska, Hawaii, Canada and all other countries, telephone: 614-382-3322. Issued 20 times a year, twice a month, February through June and September through November, and once a month in January, July, August, and December. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. Cahners Publishing Company, A Division of Reed Publishing USA ☐ Specialized Business Magazines for Building & Construction, Manufacturing, Foodservice & Lodging, Electronics & Computers, Interior Design, Printing, Publishing, Industrial Research & Technology, Health Care, and Entertainment. ☐ Specialized Consumer Magazines: *American Baby* and *Modern Bride*.

LIBRARY JOURNAL is indexed in *Educational Index, Library Literature, Library & Information Science Abstracts,* and *Magazine Index*. SUBSCRIPTIONS: USA: 1 year $69; 2 years, $117; 3 years, $165. Canada: 1 year $94, 2 years $160, 3 years $225. All other countries (air delivery): 1 year $125, 2 years $212, 3 years $300. (Remit in US funds only.) Single copy, $5.00. Spring & Fall Announcement Issues, $6.95. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to *Library Journal*, P.O. Box 1977, Marion, OH 43305-1977.

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These first novelists comment on trends in contemporary fiction, but can't always select their own niche

First Novelists

142 New Novels for Fall & Winter

MARION ETTLINGER

M.E. Hughes

Hope N. Coulter

Katherine Neville

JERRY BAUER

Andrea Barrett

Carolyn Vesser

DONNA CONNOR

Bill Kent

ROBERT GIARD

Dolores Klaich

Jessie Lattimore

John Champagne

By Ann Burns & Nora Rawlinson

AS OUR COVER demonstrates, it is dangerous to generalize about first novelists; one certainly cannot assume they're all starving artists struggling for recognition. However, we're sure Joan Collins shares some of the anxieties of her fellow first novelists. She, of course, has the added pressure of possible comparison to her sister Jackie, who has already done rather well in this field.

But most first novelists do not have an easy access to the broad reading public. Patricia Weaver Francisco, author of the forthcoming *Cold Feet*, said best what we try to do in our twice-yearly roundup of first novelists: "We are mostly lost to the world at large, until someone . . . takes the time to point us out, to say: 'take a chance, read something new.' "

For years, *LJ* has posed a question to authors and published a selection of their responses. This time, we asked them for their insights into trends in contemporary fiction and where they saw their own work in relation to those trends.

Don't fence me in

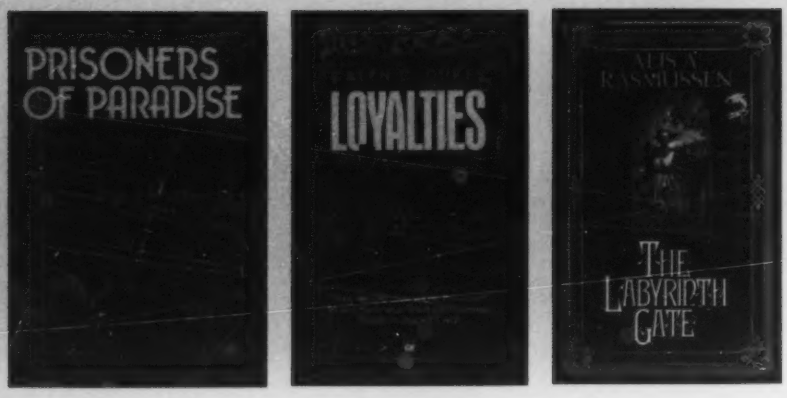
Quite rightly, many of the authors responded with an objection to being forced into categories.

Anthony Schmitz
Lost Souls
While writing my first novel I behaved like a landlubber thrown into the ocean. I wasn't worrying about trends in fiction; I just wanted to stay afloat . . . . I ended up with a novel that is a throwback, old-fashioned in its concerns. It's short, but not minimalist. My muddled hero wouldn't know ennui if you hit him with it. For the most part this was a matter of necessity. I was writing a first novel, which is to say I was looting my past. I found there an extremely short supply of disaffected characters.

Ronald A. Cross
Prisoners of Paradise
A visionary descends into deeper and deeper levels of quiet until he dissolves, and nothing is left but limitless stillness. Then, coming back out of this ocean, he sees everything fresh, without the interference of that noise which is the past . . . .

But wait, literary sharks are cruising the surface, constantly alert,

Ann Burns is Staff Editor, and Nora Rawlinson is Editor, The Book Review, *LJ*



constantly hungry. They will steal whatever they can use, always disguising this behavior by claiming to be part of a movement, just as a pickpocket tries to conceal what he's doing by working in a crowd.

The visionary couldn't care less. See—he is already rising once again, fresh from that cosmic sea. Bearing gifts for all. He will only pause to catch his breath, and dive again.

Naomi Ragen
Jephte's Daughter
Asking how fiction is changing and where it is going is somewhat like asking how people are changing and where mankind is going. The new fiction I read that interests and influences me is about what good books have always been about—the struggle of men and women to make some sense of what it means to be alive on this earth . . . . My goal, and I suspect this is true of many contemporary writers—is to reach into readers' hearts . . . in order to wrench from them some compassion and respect for those differences that make we human beings so worth understanding.

Yale Kramer
Primal Scene
I'm afraid that I am hopelessly backward about current trends on the literary scence. I'm not even sure where the literary scene is. Perhaps writers are not as mindful of trends as editors and agents—and perhaps, too, that's as it should be. It seems to me that writers have enough trouble getting the words right.

I seem to have been much more influenced by writing from the past than from the present. In writing *Primal Scene* I wanted nothing more than to hold the reader spellbound.

Let me entertain you

It was surprising to find how often these new novelists harked back to this old-fashioned function of literature.

Robert E. Merritt
To the Death
My high school literature teacher once asked the class to explain the purpose of literature. We gave our lofty answers, and she came back, shaking her head, to say we had all missed the essential point—that it must first entertain.

Galen C. Dukes
Loyalties
The greatest gift today's fiction writer can give the reader is entertainment, with the cause to reflect. I believe fiction writers, myself included, fall in one of two categories: those that are able to write what is currently popular, and those that write what they hope will be.

M.E. Hughes
Precious in His Sight
In the beginning I was writing in opposition to what I perceived as the current style—a certain flatness, heavy mentioning of brand names, a greyness of tone . . . . If there is meaning to what one writes, style is not that important.

I write in the voice I was nurtured on—that of a Southerner spinning a yarn on a porch in the dark.

Hope Norman Coulter
The Errand of the Eye
Linguistic and literary crazes notwithstanding, I still believe that people crave a good story, and that their instinctive standards are sound: good stories entertain. They offer diversion from the humdrum and chaos of experience. At the same time they point back to real life, affirming at least the possibility of meaning, values, and consequences . . . . My own work belongs . . . to a tradition of narrative about characters who do things—venture and meddle and rage and seek their fortunes; who are as mystifying as real people; and whose fates reverberate beyond themselves.

Jane Hamilton
The Book of Ruth
I think the newest trends in fiction—fiction which will endure—are also the oldest trends . . . . The basic secret is simple: You must tell a good story. I think we still need the same stuff human beings have always needed: heroes, stories, poetry. Some of my favorite novelists today . . . are poets and storytellers. I've been inspired by their good words.

J. Madison Davis
The Murder of Frau Schütz
Over the past century the avant-garde, once so brilliant, so vital, so breathtaking, has lost its primary weapon: the ability to shock . . . . After Auschwitz, Hiroshima, and Kampuchea, in

FALL & WINTER LINE-UP
51 Publishers/142 Novels

St. Martin's	13
Pocket Bks.	9
Random	9
Ballantine	8
S. & S.	8
NAL Bks.	7
Berkley Pub.	6
Dutton	6
Donald I. Fine	5
Walker	5
Baen Bks.	4
Naiad Pr.	4
Crossing Pr.	3
HBJ	3
Putnam	3
Lyle Stuart	3
Viking	3
Ashley Bks.	2
Atlantic Monthly	2
Farrar	2
Harper	2
Knopf	2
McGraw	2
Morrow	2
Warner	2
Weidenfeld & Nicolson	2
Academy Chicago	1
Algonquin Bks	1
Alyson Pubns.	1
August House	1
British American Pub.	1
Council Oak Bks.	1
Crown	1
DAW Bks.	1
Dell	1
Grove	1
Holt	1
Houghton	1
Mercury House	1
North Point Pr.	1
Norton	1
Pantheon	1
Pineapple Pr.	1
Presidio Pr.	1
Pushcart Pr.	1
Seal Pr.	1
Strawberry Hill	1
Ticknor & Fields	1
Tor Bks.	1
Watts	1
Zebra Bks.	1

the milieu of television, what can fiction do? At present, to explore a corner of the darkness is sufficient for me. To write a novel that my father, a bus driver, would have enjoyed is neither frivolous nor easy. The best entertainment—comedy, mystery, or thriller—is both moral and serious, but is never simplistic and never condescends.

Edward R. Jones
Cage
The evolving trend in contemporary fiction appears to be the abandonment of extensive in-depth characterization in favor of fast-paced realism . . . . I believe that contemporary fiction must reflect contemporary attitudes, and today's emphasis is on speed—from the way we drive to the way we eat—and the contemporary novelist must be prepared to serve up literary Big Macs. Modern readers want to be entertained, not held captive. They don't have time for it.

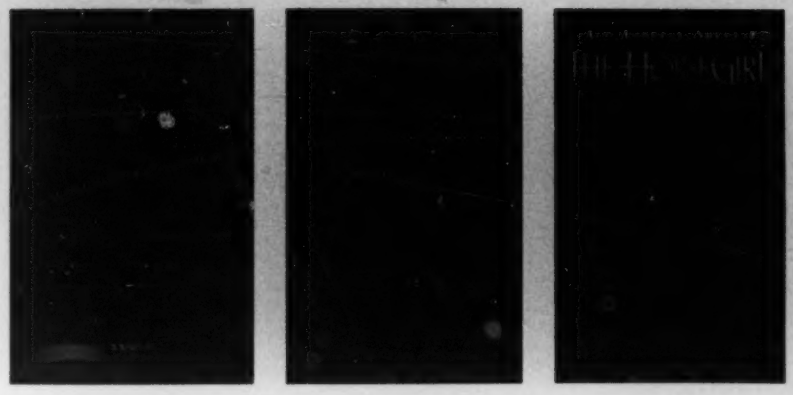
Katherine Neville
The Eight
Just as Guarneri learned to make a better violin by keeping his eye on what Stradivari was up to, so do we fiction writers read books—not only for information or entertainment as other readers do—but with a peek up the sleeve to see how it was done. To learn the tricks of the trade.

There are many wonderful trends in today's fiction . . . . But in my travels I've learned that we American writers seem to be the last of a dying breed churning out the real novel in the classical tradition. Whether it's a three-generation saga of a family living through war, strife, and marital problems (after Tolstoy); the tale of a young woman trapped in suburbia, living out her fantasies by having an affair with the neighbor (snitched from Flaubert); or the potboiler about the lifestyles of the rich and famous (inspired by Marcel Proust), the plots still pique the interest and delight the hearts of readers everywhere.

Is less more?

Minimalism is a trend that has received a lot of attention lately. Our novelists' reactions to it were mixed.

Vicki Covington
Gathering Home
A good novel is simply, for me, a long good story. If novels are growing shorter, maybe it's because people like Raymond Carver have shown us that minimalism can take us to the heart of art. Carver has taught us what sculptors have known for centuries—what's not there is what matters. And, maybe novels aren't getting shorter so much as good stories are just getting longer. I understand that Grace Paley tells writers, just listen to the sounds of your own neighborhood, your own household. That's what I try to do.



Andrea Barrett
Lucid Stars
Where do I fit in? I couldn't begin to guess, but I know what I aim for—a fusion of the richness and scope and psychological depth of the older novels I love with the leanness that's more popular now. Sort of a lean fatness, or maybe a rich, succulent leanness.

David B. Feinberg
Eighty-Sixed
The minimalist trend will continue unabated. Publishers will applaud this trend, citing shortened attention spans of readers, and lower printing and shipping costs. Stories will get shorter and shorter. Bret Easton Ellis's next novel will fit on a postcard; in 1995 Amy Hempel will receive the Pulitzer Prize for a well-placed period . . . . As for myself, a maximalist, I am currently working on a six-volume memoir of my grammar school years, from grades three to five, to be published . . . in the year 2000.

Ripeness is all

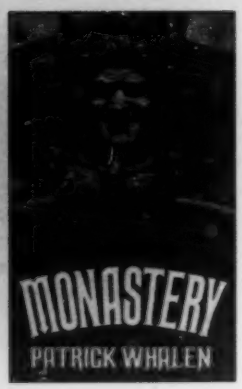
Others see the various genres as a welcome escape from trendiness.

Stephen Altman
Bowhunter
I write Westerns. It allows me to avoid post-modernism. There is a forthrightness to Westerns. The characters have scale. Working within a myth allows a writer to write large and to speak to large themes. To me, Western heroes and heroines are at once more real and more universal than contemporary urban characters . . . . They are born into a country that bashes them without a thought, which makes their love for that country all the more poignant—almost sacred. They have adversaries worth having. They base their moral judgments on instinct and experience rather than extended dithering. And, good and bad alike, they participate in a sin: the destruction of the Indians. This aspect of the Western is no myth; it is the core tragedy of American history. Under all the cowboy stuff is the serious and unresolved issue of redemption.

Bill Kent
Under the Boardwalk
When I was a young reader, my parents, teachers, and college professors viewed sf, fantasy, mystery and suspense as diapers for arrested adolescents. I don't, and the trend that pleases me the most in fiction is the increasing commercial and critical respect genre writers are getting . . . unlike many of the high-lit word mongers, the great genre writers cherish their readers. Their books invite us to gather around a campfire, listen to stories and savor them. For that, the genre writers will always have my admiration and love.

Douglas Borton
Manstopper
In a world of frightening headlines and disturbing TV news images, people seem to take some comfort in confronting demons that are safely fictional, and in seeing those demons defeated by characters of courage and intelligence. Horror novels permit the author to conjure up especially frightening villains and to present the conflict between good and evil in starkly absolutist terms. They are fairy tales for grownups, with many of the same moral overtones and mythic resonances.

Carolyn Vesser
Hellwalker
Faced with the competition of TV, today's writers have been forced to



produce better-crafted books; informative tales; complex characterizations, revealing the hopes and fears of the masses and the individual; plots with depth; and stories that entertain. Sf and the related genres of fantasy and horror, in coming out of the closet and comic book, have not only joined the trend, but lead it. A reader can find stories heavy on science, extrapolation, speculative, magical, terrifying—all with good characterization, complex plots, and the enrichment and entertainment to draw and hold its growing crowd of devotees, both young and old. As reading comes again into its own, sf is the place to be.

Constance Ash
The Horsegirl
Back in North Dakota when I was a child I'd pick out a photo album and give it to Greatgrandma. "Tell me about when you were a little girl." The stories and pictures were of blizzards, floods, droughts, duststorms, grasshopper swarms, and hail big as baseballs. Army uniforms, political rallies, pretty dresses, matched buggy horses, and the first steam thresher all had tales attached. Mother's life and mine on the farm seemed a continuation of stories three and four generations old.

Fantasy, as a fiction category, emphasizes heroic individuals pitched against catastrophe. The Red River Valley homesteaders were not the courtly heroes of medieval European romances. But I believe those heroes resemble my forebears, and that fantasy is a form appropriate to their sacrifice, struggle, and strong community codes. America continues to be a nation of immigrants, and this experience is becoming part of fantasy's traditions.

Anne Wingate
Death by Deception
What is happening is virtually everything—on the one side, a new realism, on the other side, trends toward surrealism in serious fiction and an immense, booming market for fantasy in popular fiction . . . .

I write mysteries because I like mysteries and because I think that, ultimately, all fiction is mystery fiction. The basic theme is a quest; the basic questions are "Who am I and what am I doing here?" and mysteries seek to deal more or less directly with these questions. At least mine do.

Wendell McCall
Dead Aim
Amid the inundation of the storm, a new warmth to the air: crime fiction is more literate, the varied protagonists, male and female alike, more human and sensitive . . . . Trapped no longer in the cage of pulp fiction, newly found freedoms allow crime novels to find perches on many a heretofore unwelcome bedside table.

Alis Rasmussen
Labyrinth Gate
To my mind, the most exciting trend in contemporary fiction today is the blurring of lines between genres. Our society has long tended to pigeonhole; in fiction this has resulted in the creation of genres used to label writers. But many novelists are now beginning to blend elements of different genres—mystery, Western, sf and fantasy, romance, historical, and the "serious" novel—to form a new synthesis that is stronger for being a blend.

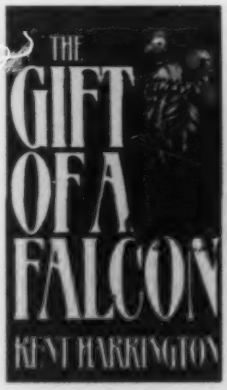
Joan Druett
Abigail
A book is like a lovely old clock people inspect to appreciate time-worn beauty, or else to find out the time.

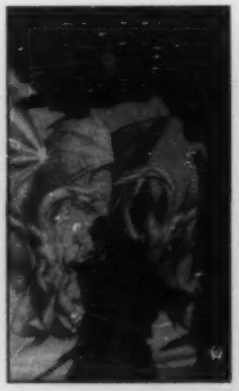
Like clocks, too, fashions in books run by pendulum. One needs only to look at the history of literature to see that. In writing *Abigail* I reached back to the beginnings, when "romance" was the rage, but not "romance" the way we see it now. Romance began with tales of villains and heroes, knights in armor, and flowers spilled into the dirt; it turned lust into love and war into patriotic pageantry.

Lavender fiction

The popular press has already identified novels with gay characters as a trend ("Out of the Closet Onto the Shelves," *Newsweek*, March 21, 1988, and Richard Hall's "Gay Fiction Comes Home," *New York Times Book Review*, June 19, 1988). But lesbian authors, as Dolores Klaich points out, have been overlooked. This season, two small presses (Naiad Press and Crossing Press) are publishing four first novelists whose books deal with lesbian themes. Since small presses are often in the vanguard, this may be a trend we'll see picked up by mainstream publishers.

Dolores Klaich
Heavy Gilt
The characters in my novel are lesbian or gay and its subject (presented in broad comedy) is internalized homophobia, so perhaps *Heavy Gilt* falls into the trendy genre of gay fiction—trendy, because the *New York Times Book Review*, in a page one essay, recently told us such an entity exists. However, since nary a lesbian writer was mentioned in the essay—only gay men—perhaps, alas, my novel isn't trendy at all.





Heavy Gilt is also a mystery—although the mystery genre police probably would call it a confection. Also, it has a message, so maybe it's not a novel at all. Therefore, as one of my characters thinks—trying to remember the words of Gertrude Stein: "Things as they seem are not things as they are—or maybe it was the other way around."

Jessie Lattimore
High Contrast
In my novel, the task was to take an unlikely protagonist—a lesbian stripper—and make her a universal heroine. This is an example of the current trend recognizing that the layers which separate us as human beings are gossamer indeed.

AIDS & censorship

It has been feared in some quarters that AIDS might have a chilling effect on gay writing. One of our first novelists fears an AIDS backlash may serve as a spur to censorship of all writing.

John Champagne
The Blue Lady's Hands
AIDS has radically altered the choices a writer confronts when representing sexuality. A backlash against sex seems to be occurring—a backlash that writers are sure to feel in the form of censorship. The crisis situation pressures writers into making ill-informed choices—e.g., avoiding safe sex altogether, or forcing their writing into being prescriptive of someone else's moral agenda . . . . Considering the antisex hysteria with which certain groups have greeted AIDS, the situation doesn't bode well for civil liberties. [This] may provide the excuse the Jesse Helmses of the world have been seeking for so long to insure that sex remains an unrepresentable but necessary evil.

Women's work

We were surprised at how few responses mentioned the influence of women writers. Perhaps we have moved beyond women writers being a "trend" into their being a part of the mainstream, and if there ever were topics considered outside the scope of women writers, that is no longer so.

Patricia Weaver Francisco
Cold Feet
An aquaintance once explained the absence of women writers on his bookshelf with the claim: "Women don't write about God or war." That notion becomes increasingly arguable as the subject of war, most particularly the Vietnam War, begins to be addressed by women writers. Jayne Anne Phillips's *Machine Dreams* (1984), Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country* (1985), and Marge Piercy's *Gone to Soldiers* (1987) have examined the effects of war on all its victims—civilian and soldier, the war at home as well as on the battlefield. My own novel . . . concerns a draft resister's troubled homecoming after six years of exile in Canada, and looks at the wounds the Vietnam War left in men and women who did not face death in a nameless jungle, but whose lives were left dramatically unsettled.

The First Novels

Listed below are all the first novels reported to *LJ* that are currently scheduled for publication between September 1 and January 31, 1989. The dates following the publication information refer to recently published *LJ* book reviews.

GENERAL FICTION

Ellen Akins, **Home Movie** *(S. & S.—November)*
Jerome Badanes, **The Final Opus of Leon Solomon** *(Knopf—January)*
Nicholson Baker, **The Mezzanine** *(Weidenfeld & Nicolson—October)*
Andrea Barrett, **Lucid Stars** *(Delta: Dell—September)* [*LJ* 10/1]
Marilyn Beck, **Only Make Believe** *(Berkley Pub.—November)*
Dan Bentley-Baker, **The Paper Boat** *(Pineapple Pr.—September)* [*LJ* 10/1]
Neil Bissoondath, **A Casual Brutality** *(Crown—January)*
C.F. Borgman, **River Road** *(NAL Bks.—September)*
Michael D. Brown, **Under Heat** *(NAL Bks.—January)*
Michael Carson, **Brothers in Arms** *(Pantheon—September)*
Susan Chace, **Intimacy** *(Random—January)*
John Champagne, **The Blue Lady's Hands** *(Lyle Stuart—October)*
Sybil Claiborne, **A Craving for Women** *(Dutton—September)* [*LJ* 9/15]
Joan Collins, **Prime Time** *(Linden: S. & S.—October)*
Merle Collins, **Angel** *(Seal Pr.—September)* [*LJ* 10/1]
Rand R. Cooper, **The Last To Go** *(HBJ—October)*
Robert Coram, **Narcs** *(Signet: NAL—December)*
Hope Norman Coulter, **The Errand of the Eye** *(August House—September)* [*LJ* 9/1]
Vicki Covington, **Gathering Home** *(S. & S.—September)*
Susan Saxton D'Aoust, **Long Shadows** *(Dutton—September)*
Roger L. DiSilvestro, **Ursula's Gift** *(Donald I. Fine—September)*
Joan Druett, **Abigail** *(Random—October)*
Galen C. Dukes, **Loyalties** *(Ivy Bks: Ballantine—October)*
Sarah Dunant, **Snowstorms in a Hot Climate** *(Random—November)*
Gretel Ehrlich, **Heart Mountain** *(Viking—October)* [*LJ* 10/1]
Trey Ellis, **Platitudes** *(Vintage: Random—September)*
Jack Engelhard, **Indecent Proposal** *(Donald I. Fine—January)*
David B. Feinberg, **Eighty-Sixed** *(Viking—January)*
Sam Fishman, **The Druggist** *(Lyle Stuart—November)*
Christopher Fowler, **Roofworld** *(Ballantine—September)*
Patricia Weaver Francisco, **Cold Feet** *(S. & S.—November)*
Jonathan Franzen, **The Twenty-Seventh City** *(Farrar—September)*
Sarah Glasscock, **ANNA L.M.N.O.** *(Random—October)*
Brad Gooch, **Scary Kisses** *(Putnam—September)*
Jane Hamilton, **The Book of Ruth** *(Ticknor & Fields—November)*
Kathryn Harvey, **Butterfly** *(Villard: Random—September)*
Alan Hollinghurst, **The Swimming Pool Library** *(Random—September)* [*LJ* 9/1]
M.E. Hughes, **Precious in His Sight** *(Viking—November)*
Frances Kennett, **A Woman By Design** *(Random—September)*
Lowell Komie, **The Last Jewish Shortstop in America** *(Academy Chicago—October)*
Reva Korda, **Splendor** *(Pocket Bks.—December)*
Agota Kristof, **The Notebook** *(Grove—October)*
Jessie Lattimore, **High Contrast** *(Naiad Pr.—September)*
Elizabeth Levin, **The Story of a Happy Woman** *(Dutton—November)*
Natalya Lowndes, **Chekago** *(Dutton—September)*
Amin Maalouf, **Leo Africanus** *(Norton—January)*
Kristin McCloy, **Velocity** *(Random—October)*
David Markish, **Jesters** *(Holt—September)* [*LJ* 9/1]
Douglas Mine, **Champions of the World** *(S. & S.—November)*
Sandra C. Moore, **Private Woods** *(HBJ—September)*
Meredith More, **October Obsession** *(Naiad Pr.—September)*
Katherine Neville, **The Eight** *(Ballantine—January)*
Robert Noah, **All the Right Answers** *(HBJ—October)*
Denise Ohio, **The Finer Grain** *(Naiad Pr.—October)*
Naomi Ragen, **Jephte's Daughter** *(Warner—January)*
Joel Rose, **Kill the Poor** *(Atlantic Monthly Pr.—October)*
Nan Ryan, **Stardust** *(Donald I. Fine—October)*
Jennifer Saal, **Honor the Dream** *(Pocket Bks.—November)*
Aram Saroyan, **The Romantic** *(McGraw—November)*
Anthony Schmitz, **Lost Souls** *(Available Pr: Ballantine—October)*
Paula Sharp, **The Woman Who Was Not All There** *(Harper—September)* [*LJ* 9/1]
Terri M. Smith, **False Starts** *(Knopf—September)*
John Smolens, **Winter by Degrees** *(Dutton—December)*
Stephen Stark, **The Outskirts** *(Algonquin Bks.—October)*
Tracy Stern, **Longings** *(S. & S.—September)*
Jane Vandenburgh, **Failure To Zigzag** *(North Point Pr.—January)*
Barbara Victor, **Absence of Pain** *(Harper—September)* [*LJ* 10/1]
Edmund Waterbridge, **Hinterland** *(Council Oak Bks.—November)*
Peter Wludyka, **The Past Is Another Country** *(S. & S.—September)*

THRILLERS

Jack Anderson, **Control** *(Zebra Bks.—October)*
George Bernau, **Promises To**

New Age

We have been wondering whether the label New Age might begin to be applied to fiction. According to the following author, it's too early to call it a category.

Devin O'Branagan
Spirit Warriors
I believe the most recent trend in fiction is a nebulous, new genre that many are calling New Age fiction. When I first wrote *Spirit Warriors* I did not slant it toward any particular genre. The New York agent who accepted it was the first to refer to it as a New Age novel. She passed it on to an editor at Pocket Books who faced the dilemma of how to market it. The question arose, "Yes, but where do we put it in the bookstores?" Pocket and I resolved this problem by my performing major revisions that rendered the book a horror novel, while retaining its New Age elements. Mine is not the first New Age novel to assume the mantle of an established genre in order to find a publisher. Someday soon, however, I believe that New Age fiction will become a popular and respected genre in its own right.

Machine dreams

Although none of the authors mentioned it specifically, we were made very aware of the presence of the word processor in the writing process. Many of the authors apologized for making mistakes on our form, which requires a now unfamiliar old instrument, the typewriter. Thus, it was charming to have Jerome Badanes tell us he writes with a fountain pen and had to have a fellow author type his form for him. We were further intrigued to learn that his book concerns an extreme reaction to banishment from the New York Public Library: the hero, a Jewish historian, contemplates suicide after being caught stealing documents from the Judaica collection.

Jerome Badanes
The Final Opus of Leon Solomon
American fiction of the 1980s has been punctuated with small successes that give us a reduced picture of human nature and a partial view, at best, of the larger world in which they are set. These works are memorable in their insistence on a language that is flat in its honesty, and in their reluctance to engage the life and death issues of the late 20th century. They mirror accurately a decade of smallness, exclusion, and forgetfulness in our national life.

It is time once more for a riskier and larger fiction—and this fiction has always been written—a wilder fiction that is lyrical, generous, bitter, funny, political, philosophical, sexy, subversive, able to contain contradictions, a fiction that is made up of questions, a fiction that peers then steps into dark places and illuminates them, an imperfect fiction that is unafraid to laugh at its own failing attempts to get to the bottom of things. I am drawn to this larger fiction that mirrors, but also fiercely remembers and envisions.

Keep *(Warner—October)*
Alan Engel, **Variant** *(Donald I. Fine—January)*
Guy Garcia, **Skin Deep** *(Farrar—November)*
Kent Harrington, **The Gift of a Falcon** *(McGraw—September)*
Edward R. Jones, **Cage** *(Pocket Bks.—January)*
Franklin A. Leib, **Fire Arrow** *(Presidio Pr.—September)* [*LJ* 9/15]
John L. Martin, **Angel Food** *(Strawberry Hill—November)*
Steven P. Martini, **The Simeon Chamber** *(Donald I. Fine—October)*
Robert E. Merritt, **To the Death** *(British American Pub.—November)*
Andrei Moscovit, **The Judgment Day Archives** *(Mercury House—September)*
Bernard J. O'Keefe, **Trapdoor** *(Houghton—September)*
Brian Todd, **One Step at a Time** *(Ashley Bks.—November)*

DETECTIVE STORIES

Michael Cormany, **Lost Daughter** *(Irma Heldman: Lyle Stuart—October)*
Dolores Klaich, **Heavy Gilt** *(Naiad Pr.—October)*

ADVENTURE

Gary Cook, **Graveyard Rules** *(Pocket Bks.—October)*

CRIME

Yale Kramer, **Primal Scene** *(Arbor House: Morrow—January)*

MYSTERY

Kelly Bradford, **Footprints** *(Crossing Pr.—September)*
Russell A. Brown, **Sherlock Holmes and the Mysterious Friend of Oscar Wilde** *(St. Martin's—December)*
Dick Cluster, **Return to Sender** *(Dutton—October)*
J. Madison Davis, **The Murder of Frau Schütz** *(Walker—October)*
James DeBrosse, **The Serpentine Wall** *(St. Martin's—December)*
D.J. Donaldson, **Cajun Nights** *(St. Martin's—October)*
Ellen Godfrey, **Murder Behind Locked Doors** *(St. Martin's—September)*
Judy Grahn, **Mundane's World** *(Crossing Pr.—September)*
Ken Grissom, **Drop-Off** *(St. Martin's—October)*
Tom E. Kakonis, **Michigan Roll** *(St. Martin's—September)*
Bill Kent, **Under the Boardwalk** *(Arbor House: Morrow—November)*
Dolores Komo, **Clio Brown** *(Crossing Pr.—September)*
James Luceno, **Rio Pasion** *(Ivy Bks: Ballantine—November)*
Wendell McCall, **Dead Aim** *(St. Martin's—December)*
Archer Mayor, **Open Season** *(Putnam—September)*
Stanley R. Moore, **Nightshade** *(Onyx: NAL—January)*
Anthony Quogan, **The Fine Art of Murder** *(St. Martin's—September)*
Christopher Reed, **The Big Scratch** *(Ballantine—November)*
Leah R. Robinson, **Blood Run** *(NAL Bks.—September)*
Stephen Solomita, **A Twist of the Knife** *(Putnam—October)*
Patricia H. Sprinkle, **Murder at Markham** *(St. Martin's—November)*
Don Swaim, **The H.L. Mencken Murder Case** *(St. Martin's—November)*
John Bartholomew Tucker, **The Man Who Looked Like Howard Cosell** *(St. Martin's—November)*
Anne Wingate, **Death by Deception** *(Walker—November)*

ROMANCE

Joe David Bellamy, **Suzi Sinzinnati** *(Pushcart Pr.—January)*
Jo Beverley, **Lord Wraybourne's Betrothed** *(Walker—October)*
Mavis Cheek, **Pause Between Acts** *(S. & S.—November)*
Penny Colvin, **Blood and Wine** *(Pocket Bks.—January)*
Beryl Kingston, **A Time To Love** *(St. Martin's—October)*
Richard Rayner, **Los Angeles Without a Map** *(Weidenfeld & Nicolson—January)*
Marylyle Rogers, **Wary Hearts** *(Pocket Bks.—November)*
Debra Lee, **Heartbeat** *(Ashley Bks.—November)*
Katherine Sturtevant, **A Mistress Moderately Fair** *(Alyson Pubns.—September)*
Theresa Weir, **Amazon Lily** *(Pocket Bks.—October)*

HORROR

Douglas Borton, **Manstopper** *(Onyx: NAL—September)*
R. Patrick Gates, **Fear** *(Onyx: NAL—October)*
Devin O'Branagan, **Spirit Warriors** *(Pocket Bks.—November)*
Michael Paine, **Cities of the Dead** *(Berkley Bks.—October)*
Patrick Whalen, **Monastery** *(Pocket Bks.—September)*

FANTASY

Constance Ash, **The Horsegirl** *(Ace: Berkley—October)*
Steve Hickman, **The Lemurian Stone** *(Berkley Bks.—September)*
Carl Miller, **Dragonbound** *(Berkley Bks.—December)*
Melanie Rawn, **Dragon Prince** *(DAW Bks.—December)*
Matt Ruff, **Fool on the Hill** *(Atlantic Monthly Pr.—October)*
Delia Sherman, **Through a Brazen Mirror** *(Ace: Berkley—January)*

SCIENCE FICTION

Johanna M. Bolton, **Alien Within** *(Del Rey: Ballantine—January)*
Ronald A. Cross, **Prisoners of Paradise** *(Watts—October)*
Stephen Fine, **Molly Dear** *(Thomas Dunne Bk: St. Martin's—November)*
Aline B. Kaplan, **Khyren** *(Baen Bks.—October)*
Alis Rasmussen, **Labyrinth Gate** *(Baen Bks.—December)*
Melissa Scott & Lisa Barnett, **Armor of Light** *(Baen Bks.—October)*
Carolyn Vesser, **Hellwalker** *(Tor Bks.—December)*
Eric Vinicoff, **Maiden Flight** *(Baen Bks.—December)*
Ann T. Zeddies, **Deathgift** *(Del Rey: Ballantine—January)*

WESTERNS

Stephen Altman, **Bowhunter** *(Walker—November)*
Kirk Winkler, **The Intruders** *(Walker—October)*

An evaluation of three online databases in librarianship: ERIC, LISA, and Library Literature

Librarianship Online: Old Problems, No New Solutions

By Margaret F. Stieg & Joan L. Atkinson

OVER THE LAST 25 years many aspects of the information transfer process have been automated. Most libraries now offer online searching of databases as part of their reference services. Although the frequency of online database searching depends on the goals, objectives, and funding of the individual library, there is no doubt that online databases are increasingly important information sources.

Twenty-five years have also, however, allowed the first euphoria to fade. Just as computers no longer appear to promise planned obsolescence for librarians, we have come to appreciate that online databases are neither a universal panacea nor a substitute for reference work. Indeed, they have distinct limitations. Experience has taught that obstacles often prevent us from obtaining good results from an online database search and that not all can be surmounted by better planning or more knowledge.[1]

Databases come in a bewildering variety of forms and multiply daily. The most commonly used in most libraries are bibliographical but there are also numeric, text, and graphic files. Some reference sources are now online, such as the *Academic American Encyclopedia* or the *BLS Consumer Price Index*.

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Bibliographic databases are searched for any of the reasons one might consult a bibliography: to find some material on a subject, verify a publication by a particular author, or to find out what articles were published in a certain journal last year. Machine combination of data elements permits very precisely tailored results. An online bibliographical database, however, remains a bibliography, and purpose, authority, scope, currency, kind and amount of information given, and accuracy are just as fundamental as they ever were.

Criteria for evaluation

This article will consider the quality of the bibliographical control achieved by the three online databases that offer significant coverage of the literature of librarianship: ERIC, LISA, and Library Literature.[2] It will focus primarily upon coverage and indexing. It attempts to provide useful guidance to those planning a database search in librarianship and to raise broader issues about database construction in general.

In his classic introduction to online databases, F.W. Lancaster listed six performance criteria: coverage, recall, precision, response time, user effort, and form of output.[3]

Coverage has too often been neglected, probably because it is very difficult to establish under any circumstances and particularly so online. This neglect is especially regrettable because low coverage makes nonsense of the notion of high recall. What does it profit a reader to obtain 90 percent of the articles on library funding patterns in some mythical database when the database includes only ten percent of the articles on library funding that have been written?

A good review will always describe the scope of a database in terms of formats, dates, languages, and subjects included, but only rarely does a reviewer make any effort to analyze the proportion of relevant material included and excluded within those categories. In the absence of any consideration of coverage, statements on recall are bound to leave a misleading impression.

Use of controlled vocabulary is the searcher's main weapon to achieve high precision. Because one of the primary objectives of a controlled vocabulary is to bring together all items relating to the same concept under a single indexing term, it also has a prominent role to play in achieving high recall. A 1980 study of ERIC searches confirmed that searchers depend heavily on controlled vocabulary terms, using them 68 percent of the time.[4] Indexing, too, is seldom treated in reviews.[5]

Comparing the databases

Although ERIC, LISA, and Library Literature share a similarity of purpose, they have little else in common. ERIC is one aspect of the information activity of the Educational Resources Information Center which also publishes *CIJE* (*Current Index to Journals in Education*) and *RIE* (*Resources in Education*). A field-oriented database, it began in 1966 and encompasses many aspects of education, such as educational psychology and educational sociology. Librarianship is only one component. Sixteen different clearinghouses cooperate to produce the database; the clearing-

house at Syracuse University is responsible for librarianship and information resources.

After the directors have selected articles from the 80 journals in their subject area (43 in librarianship) that are scanned, indexers do the indexing. ERIC also indexes some monographs, collections, and research reports. ERIC documents are usually indexed by graduate students in librarianship; journal articles are indexed and annotated by free-lance indexers who are mainly librarians. Material is almost entirely American and English-language. Full records input since 1979 include the following information: author, title, abstract, descriptors, identifiers, accession numbers, clearinghouse code, year of publication, country of publication, journal name, language, and update code. Other facts are given for *RIE* documents only, such as contract grant number.

LISA was begun in 1969. Although sponsored by the British Library Association, it is determinedly international in its outlook. The database is fairly evenly divided between English-language publications and non-English. Like ERIC, it includes a variety of formats, although LISA's current selection policies emphasize journal literature. In 1984 LISA included entries from some 465 journals both in librarianship and from fields outside librarianship. Again like ERIC, it is selective in its coverage of individual journals and indexes only a few with any approach to completeness. A typical full record under present rules of entry gives author, title, abstract, descriptors, section headings (a subject designator used in print production), section heading codes, accession number, journal name, language, year of publication, subfile, and update. For research records there are a few additional information elements like corporate source.

Library Literature is the online version of the H.W. Wilson's standard index to the literature of librarianship, *Library Literature*, published since 1934. The online version, however, only includes material indexed since October 1984. It is a true index, attempting to index comprehensively rather than selectively; book reviews, for example, are included. Of the 184 journals indexed in 1985, 74 are published outside the United States and 29 are not English-language. Monographs and library school theses are also indexed. The records include author, title, and a variety of subject access points such as corporate or conference names, subject headings, and uniform titles. Also given is whether there is an English-language abstract or not, accession number, a designation of the nature of the article's contents (e.g., autobiography), the form of reproduction, the record type, the series title, if any, and the year of publication. Library Literature does not have abstracts, limiting the potential

Table A
Percentage of Coverage of All Publications (P) and of Articles (A) by Individual Authors

Author		ERIC	LISA	Library* Literature	Uniqueness ERIC	Uniqueness LISA
1	P	44	20	0	58	5
	A	54	25	0	54	0
2	P	6	12	25	10	45
	A	11	23	13	7	53
3	P	48	59	100	23	39
	A	62	69	100	22	31
4	P	11	14	50	33	42
	A	13	18	/	30	40
5	P	23	26	60	18	18
	A	19	21	60	20	20
6	P	8	25	/	0	25
	A	13	38	/	0	25
7	P	23	23	50	36	45
	A	24	29	50	30	50
8	P	38	37	100	29	29
	A	75	63	100	8	17
9	P	51	50	0	36	32
	A	63	79	0	15	25
10	P	19	31	/	17	50
	A	60	100	/	17	50
11	P	35	40	50	18	25
	A	55	56	50	19	19
12	P	56	37	50	48	24
	A	73	82	0	25	33
13	P	32	43	50	13	33
	A	35	50	50	13	33
14	P	24	35	0	7	36
	A	41	50	0	8	25
15	P	37	42	100	20	30
	A	50	70	100	0	29
16	P	15	38	100	17	61
	A	11	41	/	7	79
17	P	33	47	60	27	49
	A	39	56	50	22	48
18	P	15	18	100	31	34
	A	17	29	100	12	41
19	P	25	27	50	11	33
	A	32	44	0	8	17
20	P	20	40	55	13	51
	A	22	53	83	6	47
21	P	42	23	100	47	11
	A	45	33	100	33	8
22	P	41	34	40	30	25
	A	55	45	67	29	18
23	P	23	13	33	56	11
	A	38	25	100	50	13
24	P	24	9	0	77	15
	A	25	13	0	71	14
25	P	10	15	/	21	36
	A	10	16	/	20	30
26	P	25	40	100	10	40
	A	50	78	100	0	38
27	P	20	33	0	29	57
	A	25	33	0	33	50
28	P	38	22	75	42	21
	A	58	44	0	31	15
29	P	26	5	0	82	9
	A	21	4	0	80	0
30	P	35	30	83	15	25
	A	75	58	83	2	0
31	P	25	25	100	14	14
	A	40	50	/	0	20
32	P	17	29	/	22	56
	A	22	39	/	22	56
33	P	20	40	40	13	55
	A	21	40	38	14	53
34	P	50	59	100	0	14
	A	73	80	100	0	15

* The results for Library Literature are skewed because of its newness. A "0" in the column means that 0% of the items the authors considered it reasonable to expect Library Literature to include were present. A "/" means that no items were published after Library Literature began; it is equivalent to not applicable

of free-text searching, although Wilson is considering adding them to the Wilsonline databases at some future date. It does have title enhancements that somewhat extend potential subject access.

At present LISA is the largest database as far as librarianship is concerned. In July 1985 it contained approximately 70,000 records. ERIC is a much larger database, but entries on librarianship are only a small part of its over 500,000 records. If one compares the entries published in English since 1977 on librarianship in both databases, the relative size is clear. As of July 1986 LISA held 27,369 such records and ERIC 15,792. In its short life as an online database, Library Literature had entered 16,631 English-language records between October 1984 and July 1986.

Coverage

Although there are grounds for deploring the quality of the literature of librarianship, it is, for better or for worse, the only literature we have, and adequate bibliographical control of it is vital for the advance of our profession. Of all people, we librarians should be aware of the truth "that which is not listed is lost." In fact, for all practical purposes it might as well not exist. Mendel's law had to be rediscovered because it was published in the obscure and unindexed proceedings of the Brno Academy. We do not want that to happen to any critical finding in librarianship.[10]

For that very good reason most users of a database are more concerned with coverage than any other factor. The theme of the article "Why Engineers Don't Use Databases" was that the databases don't contain the product information that is essential in their work.[11] The authors surveyed for this article again and again expressed their dismay at what was not included. "Just plain shameful," said one.

Library Literature appears to be trying to create a (relatively) complete record of publications. ERIC and LISA offer abstracting and indexing of a selected collection of documents. Formerly it was impossible for one indexing service to do more than one thing. Technology now makes it feasible, although economics continue to impose limitations.

The Syracuse University clearinghouse of ERIC, for example, can add only 7500 records per year at present in librarianship and the other area for which it is responsible while LISA adds approximately 6500. Government reports were a casualty when

The Method of the Study, Special Problems, Cautions

To determine the extent and nature of the selectivity practiced by the databases, 67 journals were chosen, representing a variety of topical and type-of-library specializations, kinds of publishers, and places of publication. They were searched in ERIC and LISA for 1979 and 1984 and in Library Literature for 1984.[6] Results from the searches were then compared with the tables of contents of the journals for those years.

A complementary approach to coverage and information on perceptions of the quality of indexing was achieved by developing a list of prolific authors, active in the same subject areas from which journals were selected. Each author was asked to provide as comprehensive a bibliography as possible and to criticize the indexing terms applied to his or her publications.

In the course of performing these searches a number of problems arose that illustrate some of the difficulties and limitations encountered in online searching. All three systems make an attempt to standardize journal titles, but their efforts often leave much to be desired. In Library Literature the searcher is well advised first to search the JNL file to determine the correct form of entry rather than to depend on an expansion.[7] If this is not done, journals may be missed. For example, there is an entry for *The Library Quarterly* rather than simply and correctly *Library Quarterly*. LISA has at least two forms of entry for journals that began publication before 1983 because it formerly entered journals in abbreviated form.

The *Zentralblatt fur Bibliothekswesen*, a journal unhampered by any title change, appears in LISA in eight different ways. Some of the variations are the result of the decision to enter titles in full rather than to abbreviate them, but some are the result of carelessness. Perhaps the percentage of misentered titles is not high, but searchers who are convinced they "know" the correct form of entry and do not use an expand command will inevitably miss items they want.

Author searching is equally problematical. Neither ERIC nor LISA has attempted to establish authority control over authors' names—a very expensive undertaking—but enters them using the information in the document itself.

Exacerbating the situation even further, LISA formerly reduced all first and middle names of authors to initials. The well-known author, William A. Katz, writer on reference and creator of reference sources, appears in ERIC in two guises—Bill and Bill (ed.)—and in LISA in five—B., Bill, Bill (ed.), William, and William A. ERIC also includes publications of another William A. Katz. Peggy Sullivan was credited with a longitudinal study of diarrhea in day care centers that was in fact written by a different Peggy Sullivan. By reducing Herbert S. White, the present dean at Indiana University, to H.S. White, LISA conflated his articles with those of Howard S. White of Drexel, producing a collection only Herbert or Howard could disentangle.

Women's names caused particular difficulties. Nancy Van House appears variously in ERIC as Nancy A. Van House, Nancy A. Dewath, and Nancy V. Dewath and in LISA as Nancy Van House De Wath (that is, Van House De Wath, Nancy). Nancy Van House, Nancy A. Van House, N.V. Dewath, Nancy A. Dewath, and Nancy V. Dewath. Pauline Atherton Cochrane was Pauline Cochrane, Pauline (Atherton) Cochrane, Pauline A. Cochrane, Pauline Atherton Cochrane, Pauline Atherton, Pauline A. Atherton, and Pauline Atherton (ed.) in ERIC; LISA entered her eight different ways. Richard De Gennaro belongs in a category all his own. ERIC's failure to standardize treatment of surnames beginning with De as it has for Van names results in entries under both DeGennaro and De Gennaro. The computer is very sensitive to the presence or absence of a space and this is not a problem that a simple expand command will solve any more than it solves the problem of Bill Katz. Though Library Literature maintains authority control of names, it standardizes some mistakes as in the case of "Chelton, Mary Kay," who responds, "Kay is not my name, nor do I ever use it."

Typographic errors mar all databases. Because the searches for this study were confined to journal title and author, only typographical errors in those areas were apparent. Two significant ones, again because an expand command is unlikely to overcome them, occurred when ERIC and LISA created double listings for Margaret Stieg as both Stieg and Steig and LISA rendered Charles Osburn's impeccably English and spellable surname on one occasion as Osborne.[8]

The currency of the three databases varies considerably. Wilsonline loads indexing twice weekly, although the short time Library Literature has existed online made it difficult to appreciate the impact of this frequency. ERIC updates monthly and while a pilot search performed in January 1985 often failed to retrieve all 1984 material, by December 1985 all 1984 journals had been indexed. LISA was notably the slowest, a condition partially attributable to quarterly updating, partially a result of its difficulties in obtaining issues of journals from the British Library on whose collection it used to depend.

In December 1985 so much 1984 material was missing that a small sampling of articles was double checked in May 1986. Articles from the Fall 1984 *Drexel Library Quarterly*, September 1984 *Journal of Information Science*, December 1984 *LJ*, November 1984 *School Library Journal*, and the November/December-1984 *Buch und Bibliothek* were used to test; only *LJ* and *SLJ* articles had been indexed in the intervening period.[9]

LISA presents special cross-cultural problems for the American user just as

LISA was forced to cut back on what it had previously been able to do.

The scope of the three online databases in librarianship is similar in some important respects. They all define the literature of librarianship in a fairly narrow sense as the literature related to the practice of the profession, the publications written by librarians or information scientists for other librarians or information scientists.

ERIC is further restricted by its emphasis on the aspects of libraries that relate to education; it virtually excludes public librarianship for this reason. None of the three databases makes any attempt to include relevant material from other professional areas or disciplines from which librarianship draws its knowledge base. All list only current publications.

ERIC is to all practical purposes English-language only, while LISA and Library Literature both include non-English-language materials and pay more attention to English-language publications from outside the United States. The three databases make a superficial attempt to list material in different formats, but there is no doubt that they all emphasize journal articles.

Capricious selection

Within these boundaries selection can only be described as capricious. Some interviews are indexed, some aren't; some short articles are, some aren't. Why did ERIC index "Serving the Elderly: A Golden Opportunity for the Public Library" and "Sources of Anesthesia Literature for Medical Libraries" but ignore an issue of *Library Trends* devoted to historical children's books?

LISA indexed the Arabic translation of an article on continuing education for reference librarians but not the original *LJ* article. LISA included Part 2 of one article but not Part 1.

ERIC included the eighth edition of Phyllis Van Orden's basic book on the elementary school library collection, but not the ninth, tenth, or 11th editions. Neither ERIC nor LISA lists Phyllis Dain's book on the New York Public Library, unquestionably one of the most important publications in American library history, because at the time it was published they only rarely included monographs.

To some extent what is indexed is a function of what is collected. In 1968 McFarland described how difficult it was to obtain items that are not published by trade publishers. That has not changed, and much important material continues to be published in

ERIC must for the British user. Most of us are aware of the differences with which the two countries spell the same language, but there are other less obvious difficulties. Among the more troublesome that manifested themselves to the Americans doing these searches were the treatment of names and use of unfamiliar terminology.

A woman who signs an article with her full maiden as well as married name, e.g., Pauline Atherton Cochrane, may be endowed by the LISA system with an English-style double-barreled surname, Atherton Cochrane. Because Pauline Atherton Cochrane published extensively as Atherton, an expand should reveal this additional entry, but other women who have not published under both names are likely to be lost.

The same potential exists if a man signs himself using his full middle name, although men do this less commonly than women use their full maiden names.

LISA also employs British terms that may be unknown to Americans. "Library Stock" is used instead of "Library Collection"; "School Resource Centers" rather than "School Libraries" or "School Media Centers"; and "Central Government" instead of "Federal Government." Lack of familiarity with American abbreviations transmogrified Lancaster's article on the VA (Veteran's Administration) online information system into one on Virginia (also abbreviated VA), as far as LISA's indexing was concerned.

LISA handles the ampersand (&) erratically. For the most part, it was simply dropped. *College & Research Libraries* appears in a few entries as *College and Research Libraries*, but more often as College Research Libraries, or *Coll. Res. Libr.* I & R looks very strange as Ir. Only one of the eight 1984 *LJ* articles that printed an "and" with an ampersand in the title was entered in LISA with an "and"; in the other seven cases it was ignored.

The worst case was Malinconico's June 15, 1984 *LJ* article, "Catalogs & Cataloging: Innocent Pleasures and Enduring Controversies," which was converted to "Catalogue Cataloguing: Innocent Pleasures and Enduring Controversies." One also looks quizzically at Mitch Freedman's "The Catalog: Its Nature Prospects." Individuals who depend on an online entry for accurate citations do so at their peril.

In almost any search the searcher is left with a nagging feeling of unease and these searches were no exception. Was everything retrieved that should have been retrieved? The presence of false drops was obvious; for no visible reason a research project on Canadian user services in Canadian special libraries headed by Beryl Anderson appeared in the printout of Peter Hernon's publications. What was missed but was in the database cannot be known.

Other problems were inherent in the nature of the study. Unavoidably, a strong subjective element is present. The journals and authors chosen for examination were selected on the basis of the authors' perceptions and experience; they were not randomly determined. Classifying journals and authors' publications into various categories again involved subjective choices.

Perhaps the decision most fraught with discomfort was the determination of what was an article. Factors such as length and the significance of the topic treatment were considered, but often conclusions were arbitrary. There can be no doubt that any other individual making the same decisions would not give an identical list.

The selection of 1984 as one sample year created some difficulties. Originally preferred to the more current 1985 on the assumption that by the spring of 1986 journals would have arrived, been safely bound, and be waiting on library shelves for examination, this proved a sad miscalculation. It took extraordinary effort and the combined resources of the University of Alabama, the Library of Congress, and Columbia University—with a little help from Queens College (N.Y.) and the University of Chicago—to produce a not quite complete set of tables of contents for the journals.

This experience raises the very serious question of document delivery. How much value is there in identifying a useful publication if it can only be obtained with great exertion or not at all? Because LISA and Library Literature list so much infrequently held foreign material, this question is particularly germane to them. That inclusion of foreign material at the same time, however, is what frees them from parochialism and cultural chauvinism.

The authors would like to thank many people who helped at stages of the preparation of this article. Jane Stevens, for her sage advice and criticism; Pamela Skinner, for analyzing the Russian journal *Bibliotekar'*; Philip Turner for his help with the tables and figures; and Nick Moore of LISA, Cathy Rentschler of *Library Literature*, and B.J. Vaughn of ERIC for their willing assistance in providing information.

Without the cooperation of the busy authors who kindly gave of their time and thought, this article could not have been written: Shirley Aaron, Patricia Battin, Sanford Berman, Abraham Bookstein, Dorothy Broderick, Charles Bunge, Patty Campbell, Mary K. Chelton, Thomas Childers, Pauline Cochrane, Phyllis Dain, Richard De Gennaro, Miriam Drake, Adele Fasick, Mitch Freedman, Kaye Gapen, Michael Harris, Peter Hernon, Edward Holley, David Kaser, Bill Katz, F. W. Lancaster, Bernard Lukenbill, Jacqueline Mancall, Marilyn Miller, Kathleen Molz, Charles Osburn, Peggy Sullivan, Philip Turner, Nancy Van House, Phyllis Van Orden, Terry Weech, Herbert White, and Pauline Wilson. Also included for purposes of coverage was Eli Oboler.

The expenses of online searching were paid with a grant from the Research Grants Committee of the University of Alabama.

reports of institutions or as technical reports.

ERIC, for example, considers the American Library Association and the American Society for Information Science its parents, but neither association sends copies of its publications. Even if the item in question is a standard journal, there may still be difficulties.

The online databases depend primarily upon complimentary copies and journal publishers are not always as cooperative as they might be. Nor is the postal service. The three services all maintain serial records, but as librarians know, while that defines the dimensions of the problem, it does not solve it.

To obtain some idea of the extent of coverage and the relative emphases of the databases, a series of tables was compiled. Table A gives the coverage of individual authors and shows several basic facts about the coverage of our literature in the online databases: a significant proportion of the literature is not being indexed online; articles are more likely to be indexed than material that is published in another format; and there is tremendous variation. In compiling this table the bibliographies provided by the authors were accepted as definitive lists of publications.

Format matters

Much of the variability in coverage is related to the format of the publication or, if it is an article, to the kind of journal in which it was published (see Figure 1). The kinds of materials most likely to be omitted are technical reports, books, or parts of books, whether we are talking about a reference work like the *ALA Yearbook* or a Festschrift. Articles from state library journals, newsletters, and alternative publications are conspicuous by their absence. If an author writes a regular column, at best the column will get blanket entry. Given the heterogeneity most columns embrace within a broad focus, such indexing hardly counts as meaningful.

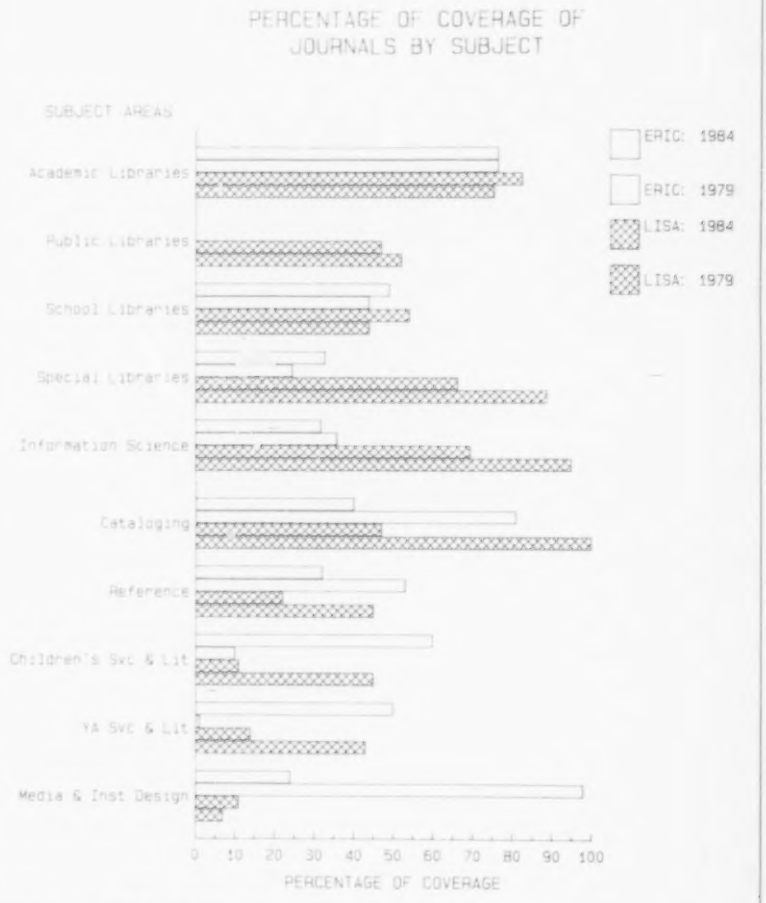
Library Literature can be expected to change this picture somewhat as it grows. Library Literature does, for example, include some of the more substantial state and regional journals. It also lists many books and analyzes a number of collections. It usually does not analyze columns separately, but makes a blanket record on the assumption that columns have a unifying theme. This practice can lead to such ironies as Patty Campbell's regular column in *Wilson Library Bulletin*, "The Young Adult Perplex," being fully analyzed online by the general-interest database, *Magazine Index*, but not, as she puts it, by "Wilson, my own folks."

Library Literature will at the same time have a high proportion of unique entries because its coverage is so much more comprehensive than either ERIC or LISA.

Articles may more likely be indexed than other publication formats, but some articles are more likely to be indexed than others. Table B shows clearly the greater coverage by Library Literature of all types of periodicals and its more complete indexing within that coverage. The table also shows the almost complete absence of foreign journals from ERIC.

In preparing Table B, adjustments were made to compensate to some extent for the newness of Library Literature and the slowness of LISA. The percentage of coverage for Library Literature was computed using only those 1984 issues that they received after they began indexing

Figure 1



online. Similarly, because LISA is so slow, when LISA did not index the last three issues of 1984, the articles in those issues were not included in computing the percentage of coverage for 1984.

Occasionally LISA would index the entire issue of a journal rather than the individual articles if the issue had a single theme; this indexing was not included since the focus is on individual articles in this table. These adjustments result in a truer picture of the coverage of particular journals. Adjustment was not made in the other tables to allow for LISA's slowness. As a general rule, LISA figures for 1984 suffered because of the slowness of the indexing but benefited from the international coverage.

Table C, which shows the percentage of unique citations in ERIC and LISA, amplifies Table B. There is obviously considerable overlap between the two databases, but many articles are listed in only one. Again, this is a picture that the growth of Library Literature will change significantly. It can be expected to have a high proportion of unique citations and both ERIC and LISA will have lower.

In compiling the tables showing coverage by subject, publisher, date of beginning, and circulation (Figures 1-5), statistics from Library Literature were not included. This is regrettable, but the data available were too limited and too spotty to give valid results. On the other hand, Library Literature's absence is less important than it might seem. We already know that it is more comprehensive in its coverage in every aspect of librarianship; its main difference lies in its indexing.

Subject approaches

As far as subject coverage is concerned, ERIC and LISA appear to be becoming more similar (see Figures 1 and 2). Specializations are difficult to identify, aside from a few obvious ones, like LISA's complete lack of interest in media and instructional design, and its somewhat greater strength in information science. It is not safe to go too far beyond this, however, because much of LISA's seemingly greater coverage is because it is two-thirds again as large as ERIC.

Sheer numbers would mean that LISA had more citations in reference and academic libraries. Even an area like public libraries that ERIC supposedly considers outside of its scope clearly receives some coverage. ERIC may not index the specialized journals in public librarianship, but it will consider including articles on public libraries if they are published in journals it is already indexing.

The inclusion or exclusion of a single journal can make all the difference to the coverage of a particular subject when that subject has only one journal. Because ERIC does not index either the *Government Publications Review* or the *Journal of Library History*, its coverage in those areas is nonexistent when looked at from the point of view of the journals, and low generally. Neither ERIC nor LISA includes the *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom* so neither can offer much on censorship.

The jump in ERIC's coverage of young adult literature and services between 1979 and 1984 is solely attributable to its decision to resume the indexing of *Top of the News* (now *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries*) which it was not doing in 1979.

Several anticipated conclusions proved true. Journals published by ALA are indexed more thoroughly than journals on the same subject not published by ALA (Figure 2). Establishment journals are more likely to be included in a database and indexed more thoroughly than alternative journals. Older journals are better covered and indexed than newer ones (Figure 3).

Another unsurprising correlation is that between circulation and thoroughness of indexing. The anomaly in Figure 5, indicating thorough indexing for the journals of lowest circulation, is an eccentricity that resulted from the fact that there are only two journals in that category. One of those two was *Library and Information Science Research*, a journal whose claims to thorough indexing are obvious.

The above description and tables indicate the relative strengths and weaknesses of the online databases in librarianship, but they are composites of a hundred details. Perhaps the most important feature that synthesis has obscured has been change.

The online databases, like any continuing bibliography, revise their policies constantly to adapt to changing conditions. Unlike print bibliographies or indexes, the user searches all entries at once; the database contains citations entered under different rules and the ERIC of 1967 is very different from the ERIC of 1985. ERIC's decision to reduce the indexing of English-language journals from outside the United States shows clearly when 1979 and 1984 information is compared. Not reflected in these tables is the recent decision of LISA to include less nonarticle material.

Overall, the coverage of the online databases bears only a passing resemblance to the citation patterns of authors in librarianship and information science. In 1968, Thompson Little's citation analysis of the literature of library science found a low use of journals compared to the volume of periodical literature, low use of literature outside the field, and a high concentration of citations to a small number of journals.

Citation studies done in the intervening years do not challenge these impressions. Such evidence suggests that writers would be grateful for coverage of core journals, of books, and of other nonarticle material, that is considerably more thorough than is presently available.[12]

Subject access & indexing

Because resources are limited, efforts at bibliographical control often stop with main entry listing, but for many purposes subject access is equally if not more important. Different methods may be used to create such access: a numerical classification scheme, Library of Congress subject headings, an indexing language, or the manipulation of subject expressive information already present, such as title words.

The three online databases in librarianship all use an indexing language and offer the additional capability to search on terms used in titles. In ERIC and LISA one can search on terms in abstracts and on title enhancements in Library Literature.[13]

In general terms, indexing serves "to identify and locate specific items in a collection, or information contained in those items."[14] Beyond that broad purpose, the different interested parties have varied expectations and viewpoints.

Librarians tend to treat indexing as an exercise in identifying two or three terms that will describe the totality of a publication. Information scientists, on the other hand, tend to view indexing as a means to identify specific information within documents. They usually assign many terms per document, hoping to avoid wasteful duplication in research. Obviously, the approach of the information scientists is more than coincidentally related to the economics and constraints of computer technology, which has been an integral component of their field. For librarians the relationship is to the card catalog which has dominated their historical experience.

The indexing language

A central—if not *the* central—element in indexing is the indexing language, often presented in online systems in the form of a thesaurus that shows the terms used and defines synonymous and hierarchical relationships. An indexing language or thesaurus converts the natural language used by authors or requestors into a common term or phrase, thereby expediting the matching of information need with publication.

The characteristics of the language profoundly influence both indexing and retrieval.[15] If, for example, the level of specificity of the language is low, the indexer cannot index with any degree of precision. If indexing terms are vaguely defined and overlapping in meaning, the indexer may use one term and the searcher another for the same concept. If the entry vocabulary is inadequate, the indexer may omit a concept, thereby precluding the retrieval of the document on appropriate occasions.[16]

Creating an indexing language is demanding and complex, both intellectually and economically. The ANSI standard on the subject states the obvious:

> If the system language is to be effective and efficient, it must be easily usable to describe whatever is being indexed or sought. Unless the interests and linguistic habits of potential users of a retrieval system are understood and given due consideration during the construction of the thesaurus, the resulting system language will not correspond to their needs of retrieval.[17]

Once there is an indexing language to apply, documents can be indexed. The process of indexing consists of the identification and collection of material to be indexed, the selection and "raw" statement of descriptive terms, and the standardization of descriptive terms into the system language. Its complement is retrieval: the perception of information need, the selection of "raw" statement of terms expressing a query, the standardization of query language into the system language, and the matching of indexing terms with query terms.[18] What makes the interaction so complex is that each individual involved—author, publisher, indexer, and user—brings to it different perspectives, perceptions, and language habits.

Indexing and retrieval bristle with potential pitfalls and opportunities for failure, any one of which may prevent an interested reader from finding a relevant document. Indexers may fail to interpret authors cor-

Table B
Percentage of Coverage of Articles by Journal

Journal	1984 ERIC	1984 LISA	1984 Library* Literature	1979 ERIC	1979 LISA
Alabama Librarian	0	0	0	0	0
American Libraries	39	53	67	43	56
Australian Library Journal	0	67	0	26	79
Bay State Librarian	0	0	0	0	0
Bibliotekar'	0	11	63	0	14
Der Bibliothekar	0	30	0	0	57
Bibliotheksforum Bayern	0	0	0	0	47
Buch und Bibliothek	0	66	80	0	41
Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France	0	87	72	0	88
Bulletin of the Medical Library Association	0	78	100	0	98
Canadian Library Journal	65	84	100	79	71
Cataloging and Classification	0	47	100	—	—
Catholic Library World	67	89	100	60	0
College & Research Libraries	74	72	95	83	59
Drexel Library Quarterly	100	100	100	74	96
Emergency Librarian	0	18	100	0	0
Horn Book	93	0	100	32	0
IFLA Journal	0	73	100	0	100
Illinois Libraries	0	0	100	0	0
Information Technology & Libraries	63	94	100	53	85
Instructional Innovator	35	0	0	100	0
Interracial Books for Children Bulletin	59	0	100	0	0
Journal of Academic Librarianship	77	92	100	65	97
Journal of Education for Library and Information Science	54	69	93	100	95
Journal of Information and Image Management	0	4	100	0	36
Journal of Information Science	0	92	100	0	97
Journal of Library History	0	72	100	0	73
Journal of the American Society for Information Science	83	93	100	72	98
Law Library Journal	0	0	98	0	65
Library and Information Science Research	95	100	100	0	79
Library Association Record	0	86	100	20	73
Library Journal	40	81	100	62	51
Library Quarterly	91	81	75	42	53
Library Resources and Technical Services	82	64	100	82	100
Library Trends	56	27	100	74	57
Nachrichten fur Dokumentation	0	66	100	0	80
Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom	0	0	83	0	0
North Carolina Libraries	0	0	100	0	0
Phaedrus	0	0	100	0	0
Public Libraries	0	58	77	0	25
Public Library Quarterly	0	86	100	0	100
Reference Librarian	37	4	0	—	—
Reference Services Review	0	32	100	0	0
Revista Interamericana de Bibliotecologia	0	0	0	0	8
RQ	70	66	100	100	84
Rural Libraries	0	0	100	—	—
Scholarly Publishing	0	0	100	0	13
School Learning Resources	0	0	0	—	—
School Library Journal	65	75	100	64	45
School Library Media Quarterly	68	88	0	90	43
Schulbiblioteck Aktuell	0	55	0	0	42
Science and Technology Librarian	0	13	93	/	/
Show-Me Libraries	0	54	94	0	0
Southeastern Librarian	0	0	100	0	0
Special Libraries	83	89	0	67	98
Top of the News	70	38	100	9	83
Unabashed Librarian	0	0	84	0	0
Voice of Youth Advocates	15	4	100	0	0
Wilson Library Bulletin	68	77	100	52	94
Zeitschrift fur Bibliotheks-wesen und Bibliographie	0	47	0	0	100
Zentralblatt fur Bibliothekswesen	0	52	90	0	59

* The results for Library Literature are skewed because such a short period of indexing was involved

rectly; they may not translate a concept correctly into the indexing language; the language itself may fail them. Users may not be able to translate their needs into the indexing language; even if they can, they may still not be able to use the database because of other problems.

Three languages for librarianship

ERIC, LISA, and Library Literature all have controlled vocabularies, but the three indexing languages are very different.

ERIC uses the hierarchical ERIC Thesaurus[19] that consists primarily of one- and two-word uninverted descriptors. Thesaurus terms are enhanced by identifiers, terms similar in structure to thesaural entries, but usually representing either a geographical location or a new concept. A simplified version of weighted indexing, distinguishing between major and minor descriptors and identifiers, permits topics treated in greater depth to be identified.

In ERIC as many as 11 descriptors and five identifiers may be assigned to an individual record, of which up to five descriptors and three identifiers may be designated major.

LISA uses chain indexing based on the classification scheme by which the abstracts are classified. Records indexed before 1985 display with long descriptor strings because it tried to indicate the context of each term. A recently implemented program, however, now suppresses the largely redundant terms that formerly appeared within parentheses and provided contextual information. LISA's descriptors are, therefore, now very similar in appearance to ERIC's, although they are in fact the same indexing LISA has always used.

LISA's printed thesaurus (*LISA Online User Manual*, 2d ed., Oxford, England, Learned Information Ltd., 1987) comprises 6000 descriptors, not an exhaustive list but a substantial core listing of the most important and most widely used terms.

Library Literature's language is based upon the *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH), but the basic LC vocabulary has been considerably extended by more specific headings, following the typical LC inverted and subdivided pattern. Typically, only two or three indexing terms are assigned.

Authors evaluate indexing

To help them evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the indexing of their works, the following questions were sent to the authors who participated in this study: Are all important topics adequately represented by descriptors? In other words, have relevant index terms been omitted? Is a descriptor used that promises something that is not there or is the descriptor ambiguous? Within a database, is the same term used to describe the same phenomenon? Are the terms used too specific? too general? Is the terminology outdated or too new to be generally accepted? If the methodology is distinctive, has a descriptor been assigned that indicates the study's methodology?

Responses of the authors surveyed indicate that lack of specificity is probably the biggest problem in the indexing of librarianship. Again and again authors in all subject areas would note that a descriptor was too general and suggest a more specific term. It is easy to understand such dissatisfaction when the term "Cataloging" is used for an article on subject cataloging, "Films" for an article on young adult filmmaking, and

Figure 2

"Foreign Countries" for one on Third World librarians. "Political Aspects" might describe policy analysis, accountability, or revisionist history. Very broad terms (Published Materials, Children, Higher Education, Problems, and Organization and Administration) were frequent.

Good indexing mandates that a document should be indexed at the level of specificity of its content, i.e., if it is about medical libraries, it should be indexed with "Medical Libraries" and not "Special Libraries" or "Libraries," but it is clear that the indexing languages do not always permit this rule to be followed. Even when they do, indexers may still not do it.

Some might dismiss those reactions as the pedantic animadversions of narrow-minded specialists. There is no denying that the authors are specialists who appreciate the finer nuances of their areas of interest. Their perspective is also necessarily different from that of the indexer who indexes in a broad context rather than treating each item as unique and individual. But the basic point that documents should be indexed as specifically as their content permits remains valid. It is corroborated by the known preference of users for highly precoordinated terms, that is, the indexer uses terms that bring together the relevant concepts: "School Libraries," not "Schools" and "Libraries."

Inaccuracy

Another persistently noted problem was inaccuracy. A less than correct term might be applied because the language lacked a more appropriate choice. Some examples of less correct terms are the use of "English Instruction" for an article on booktalking, "Acquisitions" for collection development, and "International Librarianship" for international library relations. In such cases we are reduced to hoping that users share the same linguistic confusion and that their language approximates the indexing terms used.

Such happy coincidences are not possible when the indexing does not match the contents of the article. Someone interested in bibliographies is going to be very disappointed in one article on continuing education that that term will retrieve; the article says nothing about bibliographies as such. Another article actually about public libraries was assigned the descriptor "University Libraries."

One author was very blunt about the descriptor "Vocational Guidance" used with her article: "If I wrote about or for the purpose of vocational guidance, I am not aware of it." But these examples are only one half of the problem.

There are sins of omission as well as those of commission. Any number of times authors noted that important concepts were simply not described in any way. One lamented, "Incredibly the headings [censorship and textbooks] wholly overlook the central topic, CREATIONISM."

Two authors in the young adult field noted the absence of the concept of programming. The indexers' muddled attempts (Library Services, Communications, and Cultural Activities) don't come close to the field's own terminology. In such cases there is no possibility of retrieval unless the title or abstract happens to include the concept and a free-text search is performed on these fields.

Almost invariably missing was a descriptor showing the approach or orientation of the article. An author who wrote a historical overview felt that should have been brought out in the indexing in some way. So did one who often writes with a management orientation and another who has published several user studies. Articles forecasting the future have sometimes been described with the descriptor "Futures of Society" in ERIC or "Future Development" in LISA, but both are erratically applied and difficult to identify as an appropriate term. Library Literature lacks any such term.

The databases also seem to have a particular problem with certain kinds of material. Authors of very broad, general pieces, the kind intended to be thought provoking, were often unhappy with the terms assigned to their publications. At the other extreme, very technical articles in some areas were among those where the indexing was the most criticized. It depended very much upon the field, whether a technical article was well or badly indexed. If the indexer had an adequate understanding of the field and the indexing language provided the necessary specialized terms, an author was satisfied. These conditions were, for example, true of ERIC's indexing of instructional technology. Authors in information science and the economics of librarianship, on the other hand, were among the most critical.

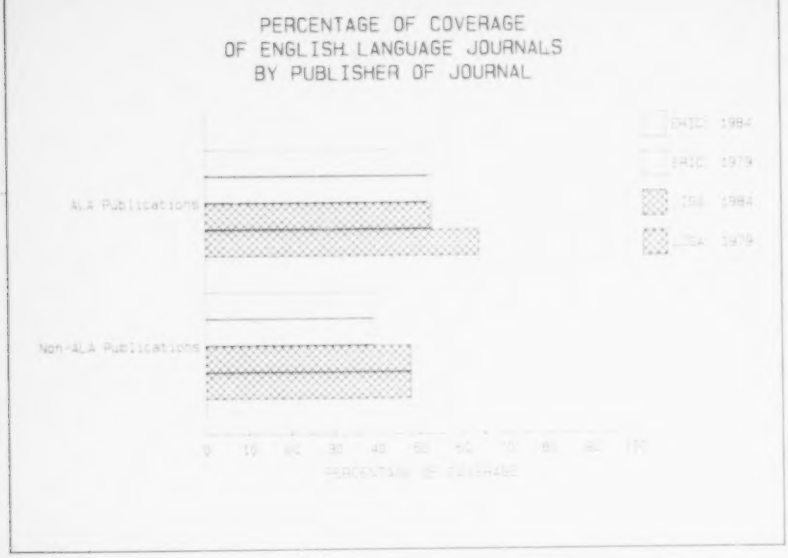
Many of the problems identified are inherent in the nature of librarianship. In 1968 Hines described the major vocabulary problems in librarianship as the speed with which new terms are introduced, the nature of class headings, and the uncertain terminology of the field.[20] His observations are valid today. Librarianship is an applied field and its constituent components look to different disciplines and contexts for their intellectual structure and language. The in-

Table C
Percentage of Unique Articles*

	1984		1979	
	ERIC	LISA	ERIC	LISA
American Libraries	11	17	19	33
Canadian Library Journal	6	19	19	16
Catholic Library World	32	8	—	—
College and Research Libraries	8	6	34	5
Information Technology and Libraries Journal of Library Automation	3	35	0	38
Journal of Academic Librarianship	0	17	6	34
Journal of Education for Librarianship and Information Science Journal of Education for Librarianship	31	46	5	0
Journal of the Association for Information Science	4	13	0	27
Library Journal	7	49	35	21
Library Quarterly	18	14	15	39
Library Resources & Technical Services	9	9	0	19
Library Trends	59	21	18	0
RQ	23	23	18	0
School Library Journal	29	29	44	22
School Library Media Quarterly/ School Media Quarterly	29	29	57	10
Special Libraries	11	17	2	33
Wilson Library Bulletin	11	55	8	50

* Because Library Literature covered such a small segment of the literature, statistics on the number of unique entries it had were not compiled

Figure 3



dexing languages must somehow rationalize the disparate vocabulary. To the extent, moreover, that librarianship can be placed in any one area, it belongs in the social sciences. The social sciences have never been noted for the precision or clarity of their language.

Having described the problems with indexing, it is only fair to describe its successes. Even though some authors found indexing terms inadequate, there were many occasions on which they were satisfied with the indexing. The question is, "Is it acceptable that on a significant number of occasions publications within a database will not be retrieved when they would be appropriate, or will be retrieved when they are not useful, because the indexing is inadequate?"

The "best" database?

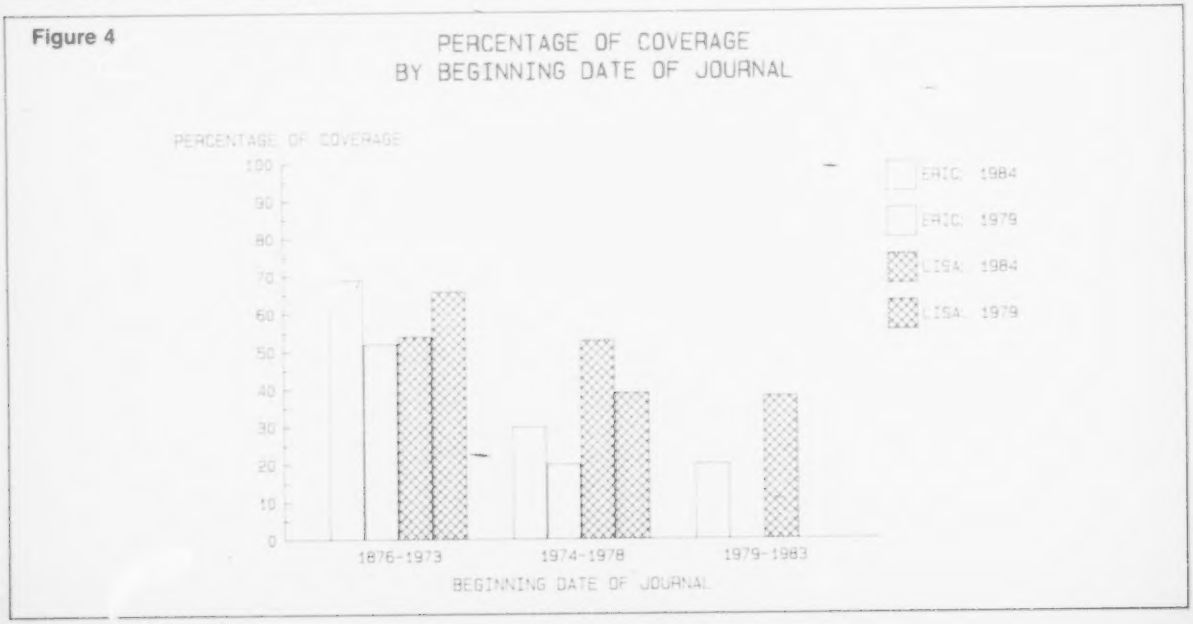
The question, "Which is the best online database in librarianship?" has no easy answer. Each has strengths and weaknesses, so a searcher must find the best match of user needs and database strengths.

ERIC offers a selection of English-language materials mostly published in the United States. It is weak in public librarianship and information science, but strong in all areas of librarianship related to formal education or to children and youth. It updates monthly and is quite current. Although its indexing language that relates to librarianship would benefit from the addition of more specific terms, its structure is well adapted to online searching. The possibility for subject expansion online and the distinction made between major and minor topics are assets. Searchers appreciate the existence of a printed thesaurus because it makes planning a search much easier and the ability to select sets directly from the subject expansion display make selection of synonymous or related descriptors easy to achieve.

LISA is a larger database than ERIC when only librarianship is considered. It includes much foreign-language material and is strong in all areas of librarianship with the exception of media. Its indexing is now better adapted to online searching than its previous system and its *User Manual* includes a printed thesaurus of some 6000 terms. LISA is extremely slow to enter materials.

Library Literature presents the most unequivocal picture. Its coverage is excellent, far superior to either of the other two databases in all areas of librarianship. Having authority control for authors is a major plus. Its disadvantages lie in its indexing language and procedures which take little advantage of the online environment. The LC subject heading structure is relatively cumbersome for searching, and having the thesaurus only available online is a disadvantage. Even more serious is the continuation of a practice developed in the years of compiling the printed-index: applying only two or three terms to each entry. This simply does not of-

Figure 4



fer the depth of indexing that either ERIC or LISA does. The absence of abstracts with the possibilities of free-text searching they provide further reduces subject access.

Because online searching in libraries is not free, whether the library or the user is the one who pays, price may well influence the choice among databases, if not determine it. LISA, at $75 per hour, is approximately twice as expensive as either ERIC or Library Literature.

The needs of librarianship

When the perspective changes from that of the individual user to that of the profession, the considerations of scope and indexing have a different context. The focus is not upon the relatively limited needs of any one user, but upon what is required for the good of the whole. The question now becomes, "Do the three online databases collectively provide adequate bibliographical control for the needs of the profession?"

What do we need? Surely most would agree that a current awareness service, a complete record of publications with subject access, and an abstracting service are necessary. But do we have them?

In 1968 the SUNY-Albany conference on the bibliographical control of the literature of library science made several recommendations for the improvement of *Library Literature*, the only bibliographical service of any significance at the time. They recommended that *Library Literature* expand its coverage to include all important contributions to librarianship plus relevant material in related fields, that it be fully international, and that it improve its indexing vocabulary. Several of these suggestions and the concerns they reflect are still valid, although they are equally if not more applicable to ERIC and LISA.[21]

Coverage with adequate subject access remains partial. Many worthwhile publications in librarianship are escaping the bibliographical net. This is particularly true of foreign-language material and that which is published as something other than an article. Relevant material from related fields is virtually ignored.

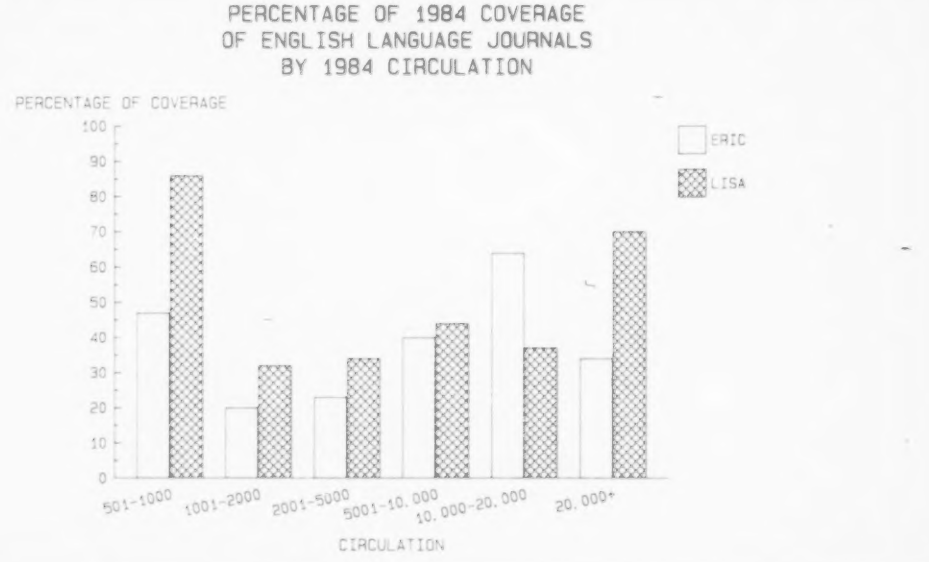
The ideal solution would be the creation of a national information center with responsibilities comparable to those the National Library of Medicine has for medical literature. Less than ideal but more feasible is to work within the existing system to persuade the three services to expand their coverage and publishers to be more systematic in providing the services with copies of their publications.

The entry and indexing processes of all three databases could be substantially improved. It may be obvious, but indexers need to work more carefully to avoid careless typographical errors. They need to read more attentively to avoid missing important concepts. Those systems without authority controls would greatly benefit from creating them.

The indexing language of all three databases would bear careful scrutiny. Specialists should participate in vocabulary revision. As Lancaster noted, "A controlled vocabulary is likely to be most effective if it has *literary warrant* and *user warrant*, if it is built up from the language of the documents of a subject field and from the terms employed by users . . . . Vocabularies produced solely by the committee approach are likely to be less effective."[22] Particular care needs to be given to achieving greater specificity.

Many less than ideal practices are the result of economic constraints, but they remain concerns to be recognized and addressed. Substantial improvement might be effected at little or no cost if authors were involved in the indexing process. Many journals already request abstracts from them. Why not have them suggest indexing terms, as is done with dissertations and journal articles in some sciences and applied sciences?

Figure 5



"There's no time like the present," goes the old adage. It certainly applies here. The databases of the information profession should serve as models; instead they are examples of a mixture of positive and negative elements. We have not taken advantage of the technology to control the literature of our own profession. We get the same partially satisfactory results we always got—faster and faster.

References

1. A good summary is Jeff Pemberton, "The Inverted File: Faults and Failures—25 Ways That Online Searching Can Let You Down," *Online*, Sept. 1983, p. 6-7. Only six of his 25 problems are caused by human error.

2. All three systems have been reviewed and/or been analyzed in other articles. One useful example is Tim LaBorie & Michael Halperin, "The ERIC and LISA Databases: How the Sources of Library Science Literature Compare," *Database*, Sept. 1981, p. 32-38.
3. Lancaster, F.W. *Information Retrieval On-line*. Melville Pub., 1973. The recall ratio is the number of relevant documents retrieved by the system divided by the total number of relevant documents contained in the system times 100. The precision ratio is the number of relevant documents retrieved by the system divided by the total numoer of documents retrieved by the system times 100.
4. Markey, Karen, Pauline Atherton, & Claudia Newman, "An Analysis of Controlled Vocabulary and Free Text Search Statements in Online Searches," *Online Review*, 1980, p. 225.
5. A notable exception is Carol Tenopir, "General Literature Online: *Magazine Index* and *Readers' Guide*," *LJ*, May 1, 1986, p. 92-93.
6. DIALOG, ORBIT, and BRS were all used to search ERIC and LISA. To some extent this was fortuitous, but in some cases necessary, because the command language and programming provided by each system offer different capabilities. All Library Literature searching was done on Wilsonline.
7. The expand command produces a listing of approximately 12 terms in alphabetical order. It may be executed in the basic index or in one of the special index fields such as the author index. It is useful in picking up variant spellings and suggesting other forms of a word that might also be employed to search. On DIALOG the command is Expand, on ORBIT and Wilsonline Neighbor, and on BRS Root.
8. A study comparing 3600 index terms from 11 different databases determined that in fact, ERIC has a comparatively low percentage of misspellings, 4.2 percent. No data was available on either LISA or Library Literature. Bourne, Charles P., "Frequency and Impact of Spelling Errors in Bibliographic Data Bases," *Information Processing and Management*, 1977, p. 1-12.
9. This is quite different from the findings of Mary R. Turtle & William C. Robinson, "The Relationship between Time Lag and Place of Publication in Library & Information Science Abstracts and Library Literature," *RQ*, Fall 1974, p. 28-31. It should also be noted that not all journals with a 1984 date on the cover actually appeared in 1984. Journals are often behind and if a Winter 1984 issue is not published until June 1985, obviously the database cannot enter it until June 1985.
10. Helpful in this section was State University of New York at Albany, Conference on Bibliographical Control of Library Science Literature, April 19-20, 1968. ERIC Document 050737. The papers of Philip Corrigan, Patricia Knapp, Thompson Little, and Anne McFarland were particularly useful.
11. Breton, Ernest J., "Why Engineers Don't Use Databases," *ASIS Bulletin*, Aug. 1981, p. 20-23.
12. State University of New York at Albany, Conference on Bibliographical Control of Library Science Literature, April 19-20, 1968. ERIC Document 050 737. Paper by Thompson Little; T.D.C. Kuch, "Analysis of the Literature of Library Automation through Citations in the *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology*," *Journal of Library Automation*, Mar. 1977, p. 82-84; Tim LaBorie & Michael Halperin, "Citation Patterns in Library Science Dissertations," *Journal of Education for Librarianship*, Spring 1976, p. 271-283; Mary K. Sellen, "Bibliometrics in Information Science: A Citation Analysis of Two Academic Library Journals," *College & Research Libraries*, Mar. 1984, p. 129-132.
13. The following discussion draws upon Charles L. Bernier, "Index-Traps and Pitfalls: Human Generated/Computer Generated," *Indexer*, Oct. 1973, p. 224-227; Ernest J. Breton, "Why Engineers Don't Use Databases," *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science*, Aug. 1981, p. 20-23; Angela M. Gould, "User Preference in Published Indexes," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, Sept.-Oct. 1974, p. 279-286; Geoffrey Hamilton, "How To Recognize a Good Index," *Indexer*, Oct. 1976, p. 49-53; Constance McCarthy, "The Reliability Factor in Subject Access," *College & Research Libraries*, Jan. 1986, p. 48-56; John Rothman, "Communicating with Indexes," *Special Libraries*, Oct. 1966, p. 569-570; F.H.C. Tathani, "What Is a Good Index?" *Indexer*, Apr. 1972, p. 23-28.
14. Anderson, James D., "Essential Decisions in Indexing Systems Design," in Feinberg, Hilda, ed. *Indexing Specialized Formats and Subjects*. Scarecrow, 1983, p. 8.
15. For a thorough treatment of the subject, see F.W. Lancaster. *Vocabulary Control for Information Retrieval*. Information Resources Pr., 1972.
16. *American National Standard Guidelines for Thesaurus Structure, Construction, and Use*. AN51 Z 39.19 - 1974, American National Standards Institute, 1973, p. 9; Jean Aitchison & Alan Gilchrist. *Thesaurus Construction: A Practical Manual*. London: Aslib, 1972, P. 5.
17. Aitchison & Gilchrist, p. 67-85; Helen M. Townley & Ralph D. Gee. *Thesaurus Making: Grow Your Own Word Stock*, London: Andre Deutsch, 1980; *American National Standard Guidelines for Thesaurus Structure, Construction, and Use*, p. 10.
18. *American National Standard Guidelines for Thesaurus Structure, Construction, and Use*. ANSI Z 39.19 - 1974. ANSI, 1973, p. 9.
19. Houston, James E., ed. *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*. 10th ed. Oryx, 1984.
20. The State University of New York at Albany, Conference on Bibliographic Control of Library Science Literature, April 19-20, 1968. ERIC Document 050 737. Short summary, p. 11.
21. Edwards, Tom, "A Comparative Analysis of the Major Abstracting and Indexing Services for Library and Information Science," *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries*, Jan.-Feb. 1976, p. 18-25. This is another study of the problem and comes to similar conclusions about the inadequacy and unevenness of bibliographic coverage. His suggestions for improvement focus more on international cooperation.
22. Lancaster, p. 223.